

PLANNING BOARD MEETING

Minutes, November 23, 2004
Selectmen's Meeting Room

Members present: Joseph Barrell, Deborah Emello, James Heigham, Andrew McClurg

Members absent: Karl Haglund

Also present: Jeffrey Wheeler, Planner Coordinator

7:00 p.m. Chairman Barrell opened the meeting since a quorum was present.

1. General Business

- The minutes from October 26, 2004, were unanimously approved (4:0) as amended.
- Jeffrey Wheeler provided an update on Town Meeting. The only zoning article before it will be Footnote 9. He encouraged the Board to have the Zoning Board of Appeals participate in the discussions at Town Meeting on this amendment.

2. 7:10 p.m. Continued Public Hearing on the Multi-Family Use Zoning Proposal

James Heigham read the public hearing notice on the proposed zoning amendment allowing multi-family use in the Local Business I Zoning Districts. He recommended that the public hearing be continued since this amendment will not be before Town Meeting.

Sheila Flewelling, a resident, inquired about the resolution of the parking requirements and reminded the Board that the Cecil Group (consultants for the Waverley Square Fire Station Re-use Committee) recommended two parking spaces per unit. Joe Barrell stated that parking will be discussed when the Board has a revised proposal.

The Board voted to continue the public hearing to January 5th to allow for further input and discussion. Pending the status of the zoning amendment, the public hearing will be closed.

3. 7:15 p.m. Continued Public Hearing on Solutions for the Demolition Moratorium

James Heigham read the public hearing notice regarding solutions for the demolition moratorium.

Jeffrey Wheeler asked the Board for direction on how the Board would like to proceed.

James Heigham recommended that only single-family use be allowed. Shelia Flewelling stated that this goes beyond the intent of the Moratorium and expressed the desire of the residents that new construction should fit within the character of the neighborhood. She believed that residents do not want to stop people from renovating their homes; however, a few recent examples created concerns for everyone.

Joe Barrell expressed a concern that the Town is moving too broadly and too confiscatory in proposing any zoning changes.

Meg O'Brien, resident, mentioned that the presentations/memos from staff planners were a good place to start. She particularly liked Tim Higgins' memo regarding building height. Joe Barrell commented that building height presents some problems because the Town does not want to encourage flat roofs.

Joe Barrell mentioned that the Moratorium passed by a 3-2 vote implying that there is no overwhelming desire to move in any particular direction. Andrew McClurg pointed out the vote was on the Moratorium not particular zoning amendments. To him, this was the difference between a development policy as opposed to zoning amendments and speculated that the vote would be different.

Joe Barrell raised a concern any of these solutions has a Richter effect and stymies the tax base. Andrew McClurg countered that these were at least a place to start. Deborah Emello concurred with Joe Barrell and expressed the concern that tinkering with the By-Law has implications and changing definitions has ramifications beyond the Moratorium. She questioned whether the real issue was related to aesthetics. Andy McClurg, however, stated that front yard parking was a legitimate concern and that this impacts all of the neighbors. Deborah Emello again expressed the concern that solving one problem creates others – if you limit front yard parking, where will the cars park?

James Heigham mentioned that the Town discussed parking under houses about 10-15 years ago and at that time everyone agreed that this was an acceptable use of space. He suggested looking at the dimensional requirements (height, setback, lot coverage) and agreed not to change definitions. He believed that these requirements could be changed without affecting other parts of the By-Law.

Henry encouraged the Board to accept all of the issues raised in Dick Bett's memo. Joe Barrell stated that the Town needs to look at the entire By-Law and not just in small pieces. He raised concerns that if you do this piecemeal then you will end up with unintended consequences.

Andy McClurg agreed with James Heigham list of dimensional requirements but wanted to include front yard parking. To him, front yard parking was a concern that was heard through all the public hearings. He believed that changing this would have a positive impact.

Joe Barrell did not agree to add front yard parking. He felt that front yard parking creates less paving. If you prohibit front yard parking, then long drives will be built on the side of homes, which will have more paving than front driveways. Front parking also allows play areas in back yards, which is better than parking. Shelia Flewelling stated that parking was a concern since these new structures are creating larger paved areas. James Heigham suggested limiting outdoor parking might be a way to combat this problem.

Jim Savas, a resident, stated that a developer cannot tear down a single-family home with a value greater than \$500,000 and make the project financially feasible. He added that there are not a lot of single-family homes for sale for less than \$500,000.

James Heigham suggested 2 issues - height related to lot size and front yard parking.

Andrew McClurg agreed with this selection. Joe Barrell agreed, however, expressed concerns about encouraging flat roofs and limiting front yard parking and how these will effect townhouse development. Deborah Emello agreed with height based on lot size, but did not want to change any definitions.

Andrew McClurg questioned whether the Board should allow more cars in districts that are not near public transportation; conversely encourage fewer cars in districts near public transportation to encourage people to use it. Jeffrey Wheeler stated that it is a common practice to allow developments a reduction in the required parking spaces if it is in close proximity to public transportation.

With the consensus of the Board, James Heigham requested staff to review the following issues:

1. Determining height based on lot size, and
2. Reducing front yard parking - limits the number of outside parking spaces or the pavement width and garage underneath.

4. 370 Common Street

Jeffrey Wheeler reviewed the neighborhood petition. The Planning Board directed staff to send a response to the neighbors stating:

1. The Board previously responded to the neighborhood's inquiries and at that time stated that the project complies with Zoning,
2. There was nothing further that the Board could do, and
3. The development does not warrant a traffic study and referred the neighbors the Traffic Advisory Committee.

5. **8:50 p.m.** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

The next scheduled meeting of the Board is January 5, 2005.